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ABSTRACT

Compiled from information contained in the Program Year 1994-95 Annual Narrative Performance Reports submitted by states to the U.S. Department of Education, this update shares selected information on recent developments in family literacy programs. Section 1 provides information on new or existing collaborations in these states: Colorado, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Texas, and Wisconsin. Section 2 describes curriculum and program components of programs in Colorado, Kentucky, Louisiana, and Virgin Islands. Section 3 discusses program expansion in District of Columbia, Kentucky, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Washington, and West Virginia. Section 4 describes staff development activities in Colorado, Connecticut, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, and New Mexico. An appendix provides contact information (name, address, telephone number, fax, and Internet address) for each state's director of adult education. Similar information is provided for individuals in similar positions in freely associated states, insular areas, and territories. (YLB)

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ED 407 594

A STATE FAMILY LITERACY UPDATE: SELECTED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

PROGRAM YEAR 1994-1995

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U.S. Department of Education
Office of Vocational and Adult Education
Division of Adult Education and Literacy
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A STATE FAMILY LITERACY UPDATE: SELECTED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The State Family Literacy Update provides an overview on how the Federally-funded, State-administered adult education program under the Adult Education Act, as amended by the National Literacy Act, Public Law 102-73, expanded programs and services to eligible parents and their children through family activities.

The Update was compiled from information contained in the Program Year 1994-95 Annual Narrative Performance Reports. It is designed to share selected information and to facilitate dialogue across the country on recent developments in family literacy programs.

The Update includes information on new or existing State and local collaborations; curriculum and program components; staff development; and technical assistance. States that are not included may be involved in family literacy initiatives, but descriptive information was not available in the Narrative Reports. For more information about the activities of a specific State, contact the State's director of adult education (see appendix A).

Collaborations

Colorado

A Family Literacy Focus Group was convened to explore State directions in family literacy. The group produced a report with it's recommendations.

Connecticut

Connecticut coordinated activities to increase family literacy efforts through liaison services with Family Resource Centers and Even Start Programs. Federal, State and local funds were used to create, expand and or enhance family literacy programs in sixteen towns. State officials have also begun initial conversations with Head Start providers to coordinate adult education with early childhood programs funded through Head Start.

Idaho

The Adult Education Department has designed a model for offering English as a second language (ESL), adult basic education (ABE) and parenting for parents of school children in specific school districts. The Adult Education Department is seeking funding from local school districts to supplement existing literacy program funds-- particularly those contextualized around parenting and school participation -- as legitimate parental involvement activities.

Regional programs have initiated or become involved in partnerships to strengthen family literacy service delivery.

Illinois

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), in partnership with the Illinois Literacy Resource Center is jointly funding a family education training center. This project will bring together funds from adult education, the Illinois Literacy Resource Center, Even Start, and Title I to train educators in meeting the needs of families.

An advisory committee representing virtually every early childhood and adult education program in Illinois is active in the development of this center. The ISBE reorganization will significantly increase the family education initiatives that were originally the responsibility of adult education. The team concept among divisions and centers broadens the awareness of family education and provides opportunities for more agency-wide staff to have ownership in the initiative.

Kansas

The Olathe Housing Authority Gateway grant combined the services of the Housing Authority, McKinney Homeless grant, adult education, Catholic Social Services, and the JOBS program to create a family literacy program with an employability component.

Texas

Since FY 1990, family literacy projects were implemented with adult education, Chapter II and Even Start Family Literacy funds. A special project was funded to establish a family literacy center which provides assistance statewide to schools and organizations interested in implementing family literacy programs.

Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Technical College System Board (WTCSB) collaborated with Even Start on writing the State Plan for Even Start, and conducted joint technical assistance and project monitoring visits. In addition, WTCSB and Even Start organized the second Statewide competition for funds and facilitated two Statewide staff development activities.

Eleven of twelve family literacy projects operate in conjunction with Even Start programs.

Curriculum and Program Components

Colorado

In FY 1995, forty-four percent of Colorado's adult education programs offered a family learning component. Fourteen additional programs plan to introduce family learning. Sixty-six percent of family literacy programs have four components: ABE, children's developmental education, parent and child time and parent time.

Kentucky

The Department for Adult Education and Literacy, established a committee representing a broad cross-section of agencies, providers, administrators, and teachers, that **designed family literacy program quality indicators**. The format corresponds to that of the Indicators of Program Quality developed for adult education and the workplace essential skills program. It was the committee's intent to design a document that had wide application and was not restricted to program funding sources or to any specific age-range of children.

A family literacy program may use the quality indicators to identify strengths and areas that need improvement. The sample measures are not intended to become a complete, definitive list of evidence for student gains and program quality, but should be used in conjunction with the Adult Education Indicators of Program Quality.

Louisiana

Volunteer Instructors Teaching Adults, Inc. (VITA), a non-profit community-based literacy organization, provided small group tutoring sessions for seventy-two parents at five sites during the year. Instruction was supplemented with field trips to community education centers and seminars on topics of interest to parents.

The VITA Family Reading Program was designed to advance basic literacy skills of parents and provide direct instruction in how to share those skills with their children to reduce the number of low-level readers. VITA coordinated activities with the Lafayette Parish Adult Education program that served as an umbrella for the literacy project and program in six neighboring parishes.

Virgin Islands

Family literacy programs offered instruction in parenting, computer training, masonry, typing and basic electronics.

Program Expansion

District of Columbia

The Georgetown Law Center provided services to three Department of Corrections facilities to: improve literacy skills of parents and their children; to improve the ability of incarcerated parents to problem solve and look for alternatives through the examination, evaluation and discussion of situations and characters in children's books; to improve incarcerated parents' knowledge of child development and developmentally appropriate practices, by examining, evaluating and discussing situations presented in children's literature.

Kentucky

Parent and Child Education (PACE) contracts were awarded to thirty-four sites and family literacy contracts were awarded to ten local agencies.

Oregon

A new Federally-funded Even Start program was awarded in 1995 to bring the State total to seven.

Pennsylvania

Seventy-five funded programs with a major family literacy component and nine Section 353 projects focused specifically on family literacy. Program models focused on the following populations:

- Incarcerated fathers
- Parents of mentally challenged adults
- Developmentally disabled parents
- Parents residing in public housing projects.

South Carolina

The Office of Community Education awarded Rural Initiative Grants to ten rural counties for the purpose of establishing mobile literacy labs with an emphasis on family literacy. The Office of Community Education plans to expand this endeavor by awarding Rural Initiative Grants to eligible counties until the thirty most rural counties in the State have received funds for a mobile family literacy classroom.

Washington

The Adult Education Advisory Council's two priorities for the future are family literacy and employability. Programs were asked to review their outcomes in light of these priorities and State decision makers will consider the priorities in allocating resources and reviewing programs.

West Virginia

The Adult Education for the Homeless program provided funding for sixteen programs including five family-oriented shelters.

Staff Development

Colorado

Training was provided for the Governor's family centers, the Metro Denver Family Literacy Project and for all local programs at regional workshops and the Denver Regional Conference.

Connecticut

Professional development activities involving adult education staff and Even Start were coordinated and held with the assistance of the Adult Training and Development Network. Two newsletters providing information on adult education issues, exemplary programs practices and resources were developed and disseminated to 2,000 individuals Statewide and nationally.

Idaho

Idaho is emphasizing family literacy in their professional development activities.

Kansas

A two-day workshop was conducted by the National Center for Family Literacy.

Kentucky

Training and workshops were conducted on family literacy and parent and child education.

New Mexico

New Mexico awarded section 353 funds to support two workshops related to family literacy: Family Literacy Issues and the Classroom and Fostering Resiliency in Adults and Children.

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